



# Idaho's Citizen Commission for Reapportionment

---

Capitol Building  
700 W. Jefferson Street  
Boise, ID 83720-0054

Phone: (208) 334-4740  
E-mail: [redistricting@redistricting.idaho.gov](mailto:redistricting@redistricting.idaho.gov)  
Web site: [www.redistricting.idaho.gov](http://www.redistricting.idaho.gov)

Hailey Public Hearing  
June 30, 2011  
Blaine County School District, Community Campus  
7 PM

**Chairman Frasure** called the meeting to order, thanked the audience for coming, and thanked Idaho Public TV for streaming the hearings. He then had the commissioners introduce themselves as follows: **Commissioner George Moses** from Boise, **Commissioner Allen Andersen** from Pocatello in Bannock County, **Commissioner Evan Frasure** from Pocatello in Bannock County, **Commissioner Lorna Finman** from Kootenai County in northern Idaho, and **Commissioner Lou Esposito** from Boise. **Co Chairman Frasure** explained that **Commissioner Julie Kane** from Lewis County was not able to be with them this evening. Also present from the staff were **Kristin Ford** and **Cyd Gaudet**.

**Chairman Frasure** then asked **Commissioner Moses** to explain the guidelines under which the commission must work. **Commissioner Moses** explained that the citizen's commission is made up of 3 republicans and 3 democrats and that they have 90 days to redistrict between 30 and 35 legislative districts and 2 congressional districts in the state. He advised that the two most important requirements are that the population in these districts must be equal within a 10% variation, and that they must avoid dividing counties as much as possible. He then explained that all the counties in a district must be connected by a state or federal highway. He advised that the commission cannot divide precincts unless absolutely necessary and they must have a super majority to do this. They must create compact, contiguous districts and they must consider communities of interest, and they are not to draw oddly shaped districts. He indicated that the commission's plan will be submitted to the Secretary of State and their duty will be concluded unless challenged. He pointed out that 85% of plans in United States are challenged.

**Chairman Frasure** then advised the group that the commission has set a target date of July 27<sup>th</sup> to have a final plan.

First to testify was **Representative Wendy Jaquet**, Northern Blaine County, District 25, who thanked the commission for coming to Hailey. She advised the commission that she will not be running in 2012. She then encouraged the commission to consider recommending that districts be split in half with a seat A and a seat B. She indicated that she thought that the constituents in the larger rural districts would benefit from this. She then cited a couple of models to look at such as the County Commissioners and the School Board members who operate this way. She also suggested that the commission recommend to the Legislature that the primary date be moved into summer or even September so that the redistricting window would not be so narrow. She then explained that District 25 is made up of four whole counties: Blaine, Camas, Gooding, and Lincoln. She explained that this has worked well for the last ten years and felt the district has been better represented and there has been no confusion as to who is representing who. **Representative Jaquet** then went on to explain that currently District 25 is 1,623 people short of the target population, or within the 10% variation. She went on to explain a few of the communities of interest within the district such as the Hispanic population, and numerous regional boards, commissions and cooperative agencies housed in Twin Falls or within the district. With this she urged the commission to leave District 25 in its current configuration. **Commissioner Moses** indicated that the commission does not have the authority to create a Seat A and a Seat B within a district. He suggested she could work on this and have it become part of her legacy.

Next to testify was **Senator Michelle Stennett**, Ketchum, District 25, who thanked the commission for coming. She pointed out that the

population numbers of District 25 are within the target range and that the current configuration keeps all of the counties and cities together as a community of interest. She urged the commission to keep the district intact for all of the women and men in this community that already have solid working relationships. She feels that District 25 really has a powerful sense of community. In talking to folks from Custer County, those residents do not feel a connection to us, and they shop in Idaho Falls, whereas we go to Twin Falls. **Chairman Frasure** then explained that the commission's challenge is that Boise and Canyon County have grown, and this side of the state has lost population, and as such the commission will need to shift districts to the west. He asked that if they are unable to keep District 25 as it is, what direction would the Senator suggest they look to connect another area with them. He indicated that there would be a minimum 15,000 people which would need to come from the east. He explained that if it all comes their way they would be looking at all of Lemhi, Custer and Butte Counties, or all of Blaine, Lincoln and Minidoka County, or a portion of Jerome County towards Minidoka County. **Senator Stennett** explained there are difficulties with all of those areas; however, it is difficult to get across Lemhi and Custer Counties, especially in the winter. Even in the summer, it is four hours to Salmon. So accessibility is a big issue, without even getting into whether they feel they have a community of interest. She also indicated that it is hard to imagine how they would relate to Minidoka, so it probably makes more sense to go with a portion of Jerome County as they have some of the same similar interests, but she doesn't think that Jerome would want to go north.

**Mr. Dale Ewersen**, who lives in Bellevue and is the Region 5 Chairman of the Idaho Republican Party for the eight Magic Valley Counties, was next to address the commission. He indicated that he supports keeping District 23 intact as well as keeping District 24 intact. He explained that District 27 is about 8,000 people short of the target and that in looking at the map he thinks the commission should go into some southern Bannock County precincts to find these people. As far as District 26, he indicated that with Minidoka and Jerome Counties this is pretty solid and really close to the target population. He could see Carey in the south east portion of Blaine County being put with them as they have some similar interests. In District 25 he looked at putting Lincoln, Camas, Gooding and Elmore Counties together, however this puts you a little above the target population. He then suggested that Blaine County goes north. **Commissioner Moses** requested that he submit the map that he has drawn on Maptitude.

Next to testify was **Susan McBryant**, the former Mayor of Hailey. She indicated that the communities of Sun Valley, Ketchum, Bellevue, Hailey and Carey share strong interests and common values. She further indicated that the economic health of Sun Valley and Ketchum impact the health and welfare of all of the other communities. She indicated that although these cities are diverse they rely on each other for economic vitality. **Ms. McBryant** then urged the commission to keep Blaine County intact because if they cut away any city it would weaken the others. She hopes that the lines are maintained so that their future legislators will view the issues from the perspective of their entire population, from the farmland to the mountains to the north, and not just 3 out of 5 cities, but as a whole. **Chairman Frasure** indicated that although the commission doesn't want to split any county, the two he worries about are Blaine and Cassia Counties. **Ms. McBryant** indicated that only one road travels north and south in Blaine County and that they are all tied by that road and that to pull one of them off would change how an elected official will have to represent the area. **Chairman Frasure** also pointed out that Highway 20 runs along the bottom of the county.

**Lawrence Schoen** next testified that he is very proud of this process, and that he participated in it 10 years by going to the hearings. He explained that he is a County Commissioner in Blaine County. He urged the commission to keep Blaine County in a legislative district along with the other Magic Valley counties. He listed 15 areas in which these counties work together which affect the economic, social and governmental activities of them all, including things such as juvenile justice, soil conservation, mental health, emergency communications, transportation. They also share newspapers and television. He indicated that although they have some economic ties to Custer and Lemhi Counties they are not involved in communications networks or regional governance areas previously listed with them. It would be disruptive to those cooperative activities to split up the legislative representation. He also stated that he disagrees with the proposal to split Carey off as there is no direct road to link them to Minidoka County without going through Lincoln County. He stated that Jerome would be the choice to pull into their district as they have similar economic issues and their water issues are similar. **Commissioner Finman** then asked him to clarify the water issue. **Mr. Schoen** advised that he was talking about the management of ground water and surface water together as well as the interests in the agricultural use of water and the impacts of the upstream and downstream receipt and use of water.

**Chairman Frasure** then indicated that this commission has nearly tripled the number of public meetings over the prior commission, to include coming to Hailey

Next to testify was **Janie Davidson**, from Ketchum. **Ms. Davidson** first read a letter from **Julie Dahlgren**, who could not be present. **Ms. Dahlgren's** letter encouraged the commission to incorporate Custer County into District 25 as she feels that Custer County and Blaine County share many of the same recreational and tourism interests which she cited such as fishing, hiking, rafting, etc. She also stated that they share a rising second home economy. **Ms. Dahlgren's** letter also pointed out that Blaine County sends Smiley Creek students to Challis High School and there is a similar arrangement for Yale students to attend Minidoka schools. She also wanted to note that District 25

shares farming and ranching interests. **Janie Davidson** then indicated that she would like to see Blaine County stay just as it is now represented; however if there needs to be a change, she would like the commission to consider some common interests which they share with Custer County such as doctors, the Lewis and Clark trail, trapping, mining, preserving the salmon species, and that many families send their children in Custer County to schools in Blaine County for their secondary education, and that they share many interests independent of political ideologies.

**Katherine Goldman**, who lives in Bellevue and serves on the Planning and Zoning Commission and also the Blaine County Soil Conservation District was next to address the commission, and asked that their district be kept intact as it is now. She indicated that although the district is diverse, the legislators have done a good job representing them. She opposes splitting Blaine County as each community is connected to the health and future of Blaine County, as **Ms. McBryant** outlined earlier. She stated that although they share some important recreational and tourist interests with Custer County, they share more with communities to their south and asked that the commission look towards Lincoln County to join them.

**Chairman Frasure** then indicated that as no one further had signed up to testify he invited anyone else from the audience to speak if they wished. **Jon Thorson**, who lives north of Hailey and is the former Mayor of Sun Valley, then addressed the commission. He observed that Blaine County is very diverse in terms of its people and industries; however, they function well together. The district is similar socio-economically and agrees with those that urge that Blaine County be kept whole and asked that the commission look south to join them and not to Custer County.

**Lawrence Schoen** then asked to speak again to make it clear that he strongly opposes any consideration of splitting Blaine County. He indicated that Blaine County is one Unified School District and that they have the highest property value per capita in the state. He indicated that if they had to go to two separate groups of legislators regarding the school district it would be counterproductive. He also indicated that 60% of the taxes collected go to the school district. In answer to a question from **Commissioner Andersen** about taxes, **Mr. Schoen** indicated that they receive compensation based on the old formula using local property tax support, and that the state provides 23%.

**Chairman Frasure** then asked about the cooperation with schools in Minidoka and Custer County. **Mr. Schoen** indicated that there is cooperation with these outlying schools, as well as cooperation with Minidoka for fire services.

**Chairman Frasure** then asked for any testimony regarding Congressional Redistricting.

**Representative Wendy Jaquet** indicated that she likes the idea of one rural and one urban district in the state. She referred to a Gallatin Group survey which indicated that Idaho is almost a 50/50 split between those that feel that agricultural interests will restore the economy versus those that feel that technology and information businesses will bring our economy back. She thought that in the interest of bringing back the economy it would be good to have a Congressman who could strongly represent a rural area and then one that represents the Treasure Valley area. She also clarified that the reason that they cooperate with Minidoka schools is that there is a small tail of that county here, and that the Carey School is K-12, and it really benefits from the Blaine County school district funding. **Commissioner Moses** inquired if she was suggesting that one congressional member would advocate agricultural industries and the other would advocate information technology, and she agreed. **Commissioner Esposito** then asked about her idea of moving the primary date.

**Representative Jaquet** stated that her concern is that the commission is under the gun to get the plan done, and that if it does go to court the state can get into March and people still won't know where they are going to run and what their district will look like. She stated that this can be unsettling as that makes a short window between the March filing deadline and the May primary, so she suggested that pushing out the primary date would be beneficial. **Chairman Frasure** then indicated that the people in eastern Idaho don't feel a particular kinship with those in Coeur d'Alene. What if Blaine County wound up in the northern or rural congressional district? **Ms. Jaquet** said she understands that this is difficult; however, it is the fear of losing rural representation that makes the rural vs. urban district idea intriguing. **Chairman Frasure** then encouraged the audience to go onto the website and draw a Congressional district plan.

**Commissioner Moses** then moved that the next meeting of the commission be on July 13<sup>th</sup> at 1:30 in Boise with a final public hearing in Meridian that evening at 7:00 pm and all agreed. He also reminded the audience that they can always submit plans and that their public input and contribution to the process was appreciated.

**Commissioner Andersen** also reminded the group that they can comment on the maps already submitted on the website.

The meeting was then adjourned at 8:18 pm.